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# Disclosures Hurt CIA, Sen. Russell Asserts

## Georgian Defends Subsidies, Says Image Abroad Weakened

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WASHINGTON, March 3—Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., says that recent public disclosures have "very seriously" damaged the Central Intelligence Agency and its intelligence-gathering mission.

The Georgia senator, chairman of the Senate CIA watchdog committee, hinted that it may be time to think of redesigning the 20-year-old agency or relocating it in government structure.

Sen. Russell, in his first lengthy discussion of the CIA since the agency's secret funding of private organizations was detailed in newspaper articles, staunchly defended the subsidies.

REFERRING to funding of the National Student Association (NSA), the senator said "It was the duty of the CIA to explore the thinking of youths at these (foreign) conferences, the effect Russian propaganda was having on them, and the role the students intended to play in their governments."

But he said in an interview that public disclosures of CIA subsidies have "unquestionably" hurt the agency and have "put every American abroad under suspicion."

Sen. Russell said the CIA was attempting to discover through contacts with NSA, labor and journalism groups operating abroad "how the masses are thinking and how they will respond or react in any situation."

But publication of CIA connections with these groups has "very seriously impaired the capability of the agency to accomplish its mission," he said.

"I SOMETIMES wonder if we should revise or reframe the CIA — put it back in intelligence where it was before," Sen. Russell stated.

The Georgia senator has been

chairman of the Armed Services and Appropriations subcommittee on the CIA since it was formed on Jan. 28, 1955. As Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, he was kept apprised of CIA activities prior to creation of the special subcommittee.

Sen. Russell said he knew of the CIA program to fund private organizations when it was begun some 15 years ago "before the committee was constituted."

"Sen. (Leverett) Saltonstall, R-Mass., and I were apprised of it," Sen. Russell said. Sen. Saltonstall, ranking Republican on the Armed Services Committee, retired last year.

Sen. Russell said of the CIA subsidy policy, "I approved it. If the circumstances were the same I would approve it again."

THROUGH participation of American students at the Helsinki youth festival "we practically drove the Russians from the festival," the senator commented. "We broke down the Russians' expensive propaganda machine at the expense of less, as I recall it, of less than \$200,000."

Sen. Russell said that in "about 15 years the amount of money they (the CIA) spent on all of it was very small, approximately \$25-30 million for labor and everything else."

He called it "the most successful operation for the amount of money spent of any operation this government has undertaken."

CIA financing of organizations in journalism and other fields "served some useful purpose," the senator added. "It is useful to know what newspapermen and writers are thinking; not

what they are writing, but actually thinking. In most countries they must print the party line."

SEN. RUSSELL said the CIA was "very scrupulous in its determination not to influence by fear or anything else these people (American organizations) in their thinking."

"My chief objection was dealing with so many left-wing groups. Their (the CIA's) explanation was that the Communists knew the affiliations (of conservative groups) and would only 'open up' with left-wing groups."

The senator declined to comment on whether there are any private organizations still receiving financial aid from the CIA.

On the matter of continued government support for such groups, he said, however, "I doubt they would be very useful if we sent Americans abroad to a labor convention financed by the State Department."

The senator said that "by and large" he thinks the CIA has done "an excellent job." The information gathered by the agency "has been a very substantial part of preserving world peace," he said.

ALTHOUGH the Senate watchdog committee takes no part in originating programs or policy, Sen. Russell said that

"two or three times" he has objected to certain practices and gotten the CIA "to change the methods they employ. . . ."

The senator said he could not give any specifics on the "methods" he was referring to.

The CIA committee chairman conceded that times have changed since the program of CIA financial aid had begun.

"I can see that this all started in a different atmosphere than we have today," he said. But the fact that there is currently a Russian-Chinese split does not remove the need for gathering the intelligence, he said.

Sen. Russell rejected the charges that some students were "trapped" into cooperation with the CIA.

"I CANNOT remember, in all of the emotionalism or criticism, one single person who has been forced to do anything or been brainwashed by the CIA," he said. "It is amazing to me that people would accept it without even a single individual being brought forward."

The senator said he had "no knowledge" of any draft deferments obtained for NSA leaders by the CIA. And he said that agreements signed by some students were only, in effect, "swearing allegiance to the United States of America."

"If they didn't want to do that, they could have stayed abroad after the festivals," the senator asserted.

Sen. Russell said he believed much current criticism of the CIA is "based on a misunderstanding of the function of the agency."

P. Kelley, Wayne  
Russell, Richard B.  
CIA 2.04.2 General  
CIA 8.02